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With the downfall of Shepherd ended local self-government in the District of Columbia, and in 1874 began the commission form of government with all the chief appointments resting in the President and the population not voting. Mr. Bryan's history stops at this point, but it is evident that he has a great deal more to say and a third volume bringing the history up to the present day is to be hoped for.

GAILLARD HUNT.

Anglo-American Isthmian Diplomacy 1815-1915. By MARY WILHELMINE WILLIAMS, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of History, Goucher College. (Washington: American Historical Association; London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press. 1916. Pp. ix, 392.)

THE excellence of the work done in this volume is attested by the fact that the Justin Winsor Prize in American History for 1914 was awarded to the author on account of it. It is indeed the most important exposition, historically speaking, of the subject to which it relates. For the first time, by reason of the use of manuscripts in the Public Record Office in London and the Department of State at Washington, but particularly of those in London, the actual course of the negotiation of the celebrated Clayton-Bulwer Treaty is disclosed. In one place (p. 102) the author speaks of Clayton as having been guilty of "indirection", and elsewhere represents him as having shown a want of what we may call steadiness in the conduct of the transaction. It is not implied, however, that he overreached his adversaries in the negotiations. All the proofs combine to show how ardent was his desire to make a treaty which should on the one hand be approved by the United States Senate, and which should on the other hand be the means of averting a collision with Great Britain. The latter motive seems indeed to have been the overruling one, and to such an extent was it influential that it produced results in phraseology that came near defeating Clayton's main object.

This circumstance and the train of events connected with it render appropriate certain comments which by no means affect the accuracy or thoroughness of the author's investigations but relate rather to historical perspective. On a certain occasion a public speaker, when asked to give reasons for his demand for a "big navy", replied that he "desired to be in the fashion". By analogy, we may say that there seems to be a certain historical "atmosphere" which is supposed to be essential to the discussion of the diplomacy of Pierce's administration, to say nothing of that of Buchanan. A certain deprecation should, it seems, characterize it: a suspicion of aggressiveness, especially in the interest of the "slave power", should always attend it; and to this should be added, for seasoning, just a dash of assumed demagoguery. On any other supposition, how are we to explain the fact that, while the language of Pierce's message of 1855 is admitted to have been temperate, there should be found, in the "determination not to yield on either the

recruiting difficulty or the dispute over Central America", a "hostile note"? And how, on any other supposition, is the statement to be explained that the "compromise", effected under Buchanan in 1860, was "an unequal one, for Great Britain conceded the more"? For it must be borne in mind that the author rejects as an afterthought and unfounded Great Britain's claim that the restrictive clauses of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty were wholly prospective. Had this construction at the time been suspected, it is hardly conceivable that an American Secretary of State would have signed the treaty, or that a single vote could have been secured for it in the United States Senate. In explanation of the British claim, and of the British forward movements after the treaty was made, we may indeed in fairness take into account the enterprises of the filibusters, and the suspicions which they naturally served to engender; but this is far from justifying an imputation of unfriendliness either to Pierce and Marcy or to Buchanan and Cass. While it is true that Marcy was not easily intimidated, and was not inclined to yield clear rights under the stress of threats, he sincerely desired to maintain friendly relations with Great Britain on the basis of mutual respect. His disposition in this regard is clearly exemplified by the reciprocity treaty of 1854, which was largely his handiwork. As for Buchanan, who, for reasons generally understood, to a great extent personally conducted the diplomacy of his own administration, his desire to preserve the most cordial relations with Great Britain is amply attested. Ten years earlier, as Secretary of State, his reluctance to force the issue with that government in the Oregon controversy caused Polk to regard him as "timid". Of the essential friendliness of his attitude there can be no doubt.

In the author's preface, it is stated that chapter X., which embraces the latest phases of the tolls question and even adverts to what is called the "new Monroe Doctrine", covers a period too recent for satisfactory treatment. The facts are, however, pretty well known, and future investigations will not add anything that is requisite to a judgment upon the questions involved. But, should further disclosures be made, they can hardly justify stronger expressions than the author has used in condemnation of the diplomacy of the United States in the matter. We are indeed advised that the reply of Mr. Knox to the British protest was "evasive and in its arguments unsound", so that it did not have "the undivided support of the nation". The latter test we may reject as inconclusive, in view not only of the popular reception accorded to President Wilson's address to Congress of March 5, 1914, but also of the circumstance that Congress, in eventually granting a reluctant repeal of the exemption of coastwise vessels, reaffirmed the right of the United States in the premises. A more intelligent understanding of the subject would, besides, have been assured if the author had pointed out the particulars in which Mr. Knox's note was "evasive" and "unsound". Had this been done, the fact should have appeared that the

position of the British government was not what it seems to be supposed to have been. The British government did not in fact allege that it would have suffered any wrong if the tolls schedule had actually gone into operation and American coastwise vessels had been exempted from the payment of dues. The precise claim was that all vessels should be included in the aggregate tonnage on which the rate of tolls was computed; and this had in reality been done. The protest of the British government was based upon the circumstance that the language of the act of 1912 was broad enough to permit the government of the United States to omit its coastwise vessels from the computation of rates, in case it should at some future time see fit to do so. In other words, the protest was in effect a reservation made with reference to a future contingency. It is, therefore, not strange that the British government, after receiving Mr. Knox's reply, did not continue the correspondence.

Union Portraits. By GAMALIEL BRADFORD. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1916. Pp. xvi, 330.)

THERE are sure to be three ways of regarding these essays. The pedestrian student, finding in them the pedestrian task declined, will call them vague. The historian of broader views and more generous sympathies, is likely to applaud their temper. The reader who approaches them as literature will be the most equivocal of the three.

The dissatisfaction of the pedestrian in history will not trouble Mr. Bradford. To look in his pages for the definite sequence of his subject's career, is to ignore his own warning as to what he has set out to do. Here, as in his earlier volume, *Confederate Portraits*, he aims at what he terms "psychography"—which, however, many of us fail to distinguish from a familiar thing not disguised in a peculiar name. The manifest difference between an essay by Mr. Bradford and one by, let us say, such an old-fashioned workman as Macaulay, is not, to the ordinary intelligence, a matter of the literary form. Though Mr. Bradford will, of course, disagree, most of us will find the difference between him and, say, Macaulay, when it shows to his advantage, to lie in a more jovial cast of mind, and when it is not to his advantage to involve a less arduous apprenticeship to letters. In both cases the predominant note is the freely impressionistic use of a vast knowledge of detail. In this impressionism of Mr. Bradford's is revealed his attractive temper, the gracious, glancing, always slightly amused attack, which contrasts so happily with the dogmatism of so many critics. This it is that will lead every fair-minded student to applaud him, to hope he will not cease applying to American history this fine clarifier of an atmosphere rendered murky by acrimonious debate.

And yet, from the historical point of view, one must ask the question, Is there here any contribution to our understanding of—not merely our attitude toward—our history? Do these essays, discussing all the